

Enabling Digital by Default: Five recommendations to transform infrastructure delivery

Consult Australia has launched a new *Enabling Digital by Default* white paper, presenting a practical, industry-informed roadmap to seamlessly integrate digital practices across the infrastructure sector.

With Australian governments committing \$647 billion to major public infrastructure over the next five years, addressing lagging construction productivity – costing an estimated \$62 billion annually – is critical.

“Billions of dollars in infrastructure projects are still delivered using outdated methods – paper plans, wet signatures and PDFs,” says Consult Australia Chief Executive Officer Jonathan Cartledge.

“Everyone knows our industry must change. We can all see the consequences of being slow off the digital mark – decades of sluggish productivity and lost data insights that could help us make better decisions and build better infrastructure.”

Since the release of the *Digital by Default* Green Paper in June 2023, Consult Australia has held more than 100 consultations with 50 government agencies and businesses representing 17,000 infrastructure professionals. These discussions highlighted best practices and identified common challenges.

Five clear, practical recommendations are included in the *Enabling Digital by Default* White Paper to foster an enabling environment for digital transformation. These are:

1. Build a Digital by Default Community of Practice
2. Invest in the business case for digital technology
3. Harmonise standards and guidance for data and information management
4. Embed requirements through outcome-led procurement
5. Build capability and skills.

“We cannot afford to squander nearly half a trillion dollars in lost productivity over the next decade. A digital by default approach is essential,” Mr Cartledge says.

“Businesses are waiting for governments to lead, and governments are waiting for market forces. We need everyone to come together – this is why Consult Australia is leading collaboratively.”

Consult Australia will host industry roundtables in 2025 and present findings to governments across Australia.

In the meantime, industry participants are encouraged to download the [Enabling Digital by Default](#) white paper from the Consult Australia website.

MEDIA STATEMENT

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About Consult Australia

Consult Australia is the industry association representing consulting businesses in design, architecture, engineering and technical services – an industry comprised of 58,600-plus businesses that directly employ more than 285,000 people. Consult Australia’s members provide professional consulting solutions to individual consumers, private sector companies, and public sector clients across all three tiers of government. From building design to advisory services on major infrastructure, Consult Australia members shape, create and sustain Australia’s built and national environments. See: www.consultaustralia.com.au

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